

Avoid complicated punctuation in describing your resource. Use consistent English punctuation rules. In transcribing information from the resource itself, follow the punctuation present in the resource.

Abbreviations

In general, the following abbreviations are allowed: common or accepted abbreviations (such as "St." for "Saint"); designations of function (such as "ed." for "Editor"); terms used with dates (such as "b." for "born" or "fl." for "flourished"); and distinguishing terms added to names of persons, if they are abbreviated on the item (such as "Mrs."). These are particularly important when part of a controlled vocabulary. We suggest, however, that abbreviations not be used if they would make the record unclear. In most instances, though, spell out words rather than using abbreviations. For example, use "circa" rather than ca. This general rule provides greater interoperability of metadata and increased potential for understanding by users. Abbreviations assume a familiarity with the language that the World Wide Web has largely dismantled.

Capitalization

In general, capitalize the first word (of a title, for example) and proper nouns (place, personal, and organization names) as capitalization is used in the English language. If a resource is in another language, follow the capitalization rules for the language of the resource (i.e., capitalizing all nouns in German). Capitalize content in the description element according to normal rules of English language writing. For all other elements, enter content in lower case except for acronyms, which should be entered in capital letters.

Initial Articles

Omit initial articles at the beginning of the title, such as: the, a, an, le, la, los, el, der, die, das, etc.

Keywords versus Subject Terms

Best practice recommends that subject terms be taken from a controlled vocabulary whenever possible for more accurate retrieval and collocation of resources. However, other non-controlled terms or keywords that identify the resource with some precision can be added to a record to enhance resource retrieval and discovery, especially in cases where such terms are too new to be included in controlled vocabularies. The Description field provides a free-text arena in which to include keywords that will enhance retrieval.

Authorities

Personal names, corporate names, and geographic names should follow the controlled vocabulary of the Library of Congress Name Authority File (<http://authorities.loc.gov/>) or other controlled vocabularies for authorized form of names. While not all names are available in these resources, the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules 2nd Edition* (AACR2) or *Describing Archives: a Content Standard* (DACS) provide guidelines to establish the authoritative form of names that may be associated with any resource.

In entering this information, personal names should be entered as last name first, separated by a comma, then first name, then middle name or initial. If birth and death dates are known, enter them following the last name element. Separate these dates with a hyphen.